



Cattaraugus County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board

AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION BOARD MEETING

County Center, Little Valley, NY

July 6, 2016

Board Members

David L. Zilker
Chairman

Barbara D. George
Vice Chairman

Crystal J. Abers

David Koch

Daniel Brown

Charles W. Couture

Brian Davis

James Finch

Daniel T. Martonis

Donald Telaak

Suzann Cushman

Ag Board Members Present: David Zilker, Chairman
Barbara D. George, Vice Chairman
Crystal Abers
David Koch
Charles Couture
Brian Davis
Donald Telaak
James Finch
Suzann Cushman

Ag Board Members Absent: Daniel Brown
Daniel T. Martonis

County Planning Board Ag Committee Present: Robert Keis

Planning Staff Present: Paul R. Bishop, Planner
Jean K. Davis, Development Specialist

Guest: Howard V. VanRensselaer, Legislator

Chairman Zilker called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Charles Couture moved with a second from Brian Davis to approve the February 9, 2016 minutes as submitted. Motion was carried.



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CATTARAUGUS COUNTY FARM TRAIL BROCHURE

Paul Bishop informed the Board that the Farm Trail Brochure is being updated. He asked the Board to review the brochure and write down any changes or suggestions; the brochure was circulated for review. Charles Couture and James Finch stated that they would like their farm operations to be included. Jean Davis informed the Board that all of the Farm Businesses listed in the brochure were contacted to see if they had any revisions.

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION

Paul Bishop reported that the Agricultural District Consolidation was complete. The report and maps were passed around.

Paul stated that he would like to thank Kate O'Stricker of our department who was invaluable in the preparation of this report and Chris Holewinski of Real Property who is very skilled in GIS and prepared the maps for Cornell Institute for Resource Information Sciences (IRIS), who facilitates the Agricultural District Mapping Program on behalf of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.

This review and consolidation process began in early 2015, so we are roughly 400 days into the project. As a point of note, a normal eight-year review of an agricultural district has a 300 day timeframe. Most of our current six agricultural districts, at that time, were beyond their normal eight-year review. After discussions with John Brennan of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, it was determined that the best way to get all our Districts up to date would be to do them all at once and consolidate them at the same time. This consolidation of ag districts has already been done by 10-15 counties around the state.

Some highlights:

- 5,244 property owners who were in the existing ag districts were notified by mail.
- 23% completed and returned the review form.
- 28 requested removal (exclusion) from the ag district.
- 179 property owners became aware of this process and requested that their parcels be added to the ag district (inclusion).
- The final total acreage of Cattaraugus County Agricultural District No. 5 is 239,500
- This is a net increase of approximately 3,700 acres.
- Statewide, about 25% of the total land mass is in an ag district.
- Cattaraugus County now has 28% of its total acreage in an ag district.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Cattaraugus County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board recommend the renewal and modification of Cattaraugus County's Agricultural Districts # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 and the consolidation of those six districts into the Countywide Consolidated Agricultural District # 5.

Charles Couture moved with a second from Brian Davis to accept the staff recommendation. Motion was carried.

2016 5TH ANNUAL FARMER-NEIGHBOR DINNER

Crystal Abers reported that over 300 attended the 2016 Farmer-Neighbor Dinner. It was recommended that for 2017 we keep the cut off at 300 attendees. Barbara George stated that the only other location large enough to hold this many attendees would be the Premier Banquet Center located in Olean. The Board is very pleased with holding the dinner at the West Valley Fire Hall; comments made were that it is centrally located within the County, everyone is very cooperative to work with, the event flows very smoothly, and there are enough parking spaces available. Charles Couture, David Zilker, and Donald Telaak reported that all comments made by the attendees were favorable. Donald Telaak further stated that having the band makes the event very upbeat and he has asked them to play again for the 2017 Farmer-Neighbor Dinner. Other comments made were as follows:

- We should keep the social hour as is.
- Sponsors are a very important part of this event and the event is very beneficial for them.
- Many new people are attending.
- Four Mile Brewing was a sponsor for the event and they were amazed at the turnout.
- Commissioner Richard Ball was very impressed and stated that “We set the bar for similar dinners in other counties”.

INTRODUCTIONS;

Paul Bishop suggested that since there were new attendees at this meeting that introductions be made. Suzann Cushman, Director of the Cattaraugus County Cooperative Extension, was welcomed as a new Board Member.

2017 6TH ANNUAL FARMER-NEIGHBOR DINNER

Crystal Abers suggested purple for the 2017 glasses; we try to color coordinate the table settings. Suzann Cushman agreed that purple was a good color. Barbara George suggested black and white for the colors. Other suggestions and comments were as follows:

- Keep glasses classic without any advertisement.
- Suggested logo: forest and maple bucket.
- Suggested speakers:
 - Mike Rowe, from the TV show “Dirty Jobs”.....by Donald Telaak
 - Peterson Brothers who are comedians.....by Charles Couture
 - Ag Education – Transitioning to the Next Generation - “How Do You Get Into This?”.....by Barbara George
- Date will be Wednesday, April 12, 2017.
- 2017 Farmer-Neighbor Committee will remain the same as in 2016.

NYSERDA AGRICULTURE ENERGY AUDIT PROGRAM

Paul Bishop distributed Agriculture Energy Audit Program Fact Sheet and updated the Committee that NYSERDA offers free energy audits to Agriculture Producers. Barbara George asked Paul if the publically owned energy providers offered free audits to Ag producers. David Koch stated that he would contact the Municipal Electric Utilities Association (MEUA); he has worked with them for many years. Brian Davis stated that under the Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program, an extra \$10,000 credit would be given for solar water heaters.

AGENCY UPDATES

Farm Bureau

Charles Couture reported that Tim Bigham, Area Field Advisor, set up meetings in Fredonia and Yorkshire on Leasing your Land for Solar Energy. They were both well attended. He also reported that the Board of Directors for the Cattaraugus and Allegany County Farm Bureau hosted the annual meeting for the State Board of Directors. Gernatt Gravel Products, Inc. and Sprague's Maple Farm were toured; the State Board was very impressed.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Suzann Cushman reported that the Cattaraugus County Cooperative Extension has access to many experts through Cornell University.

Suzann Cushman reported on the following:

- 4-H is going very well. She is hoping to bring back "Ag in the Class Room", funding is needed; the 2016 Grant Application deadline had passed.
- She has a great team getting ready for the Cattaraugus County Fair. They will be doing different activities throughout the week such as learning to quilt, arts and crafts, and assorted agricultural activities.
- Cattaraugus County had the 3rd largest number of participants that attended the 2016 4-H Career Explorations which was held June 28-30 at Cornell University. There were 10 different areas of studies. She enjoyed traveling with the kids and they were an outstanding group. Her goal for next year is to make sure all of the schools in Cattaraugus County are aware of the program.
- The Master Gardner's Program has reconvened.
- They are looking to hire a Nutritionist for the SNAP program.
- Their whole team will be out of the office during fair week working at the Fair. They may be contacted by email.

Southern Tier West

Robert Keis reported that at the last Southern Tier West Board Meeting applicants presented their project proposals for ARC funding. Cattaraugus County Department of Economic Development, Planning and Tourism's project ranked fairly high.

Robert Keis reported that Kimberly LaMendola, Regional Development Coordinator/ARC Program Manager, is their local food program specialist. She works with getting local foods to the Farmers Markets.

Soil and Water Conservation District

Brian Davis reported that Monday, July 11th is the beginning of the 2nd round of signups for the Southern Tier Agricultural Industry Enhancement Program. Cattaraugus County has been awarded 2.5 million dollars. Districts are still waiting to be notified from NYS Ag and Markets on approved applicants from the 1st round. He has 6 appointments scheduled for Monday, July 11th. The Districts will continue taking applications. The purpose of the projects is to increase farm production and enhance profitability.

Brian Davis reported that for the Ag Non-Point Source Round 22 funding there were 98 proposals and Cattaraugus County ranked 8th.

OTHER

Paul Bishop distributed an article from the Olean Times Herald, “America’s Amazing Farms” and an article on John Gibbs honey bees from the Buffalo News “Bee-ing All They Can Bee: Millions of Pollinators En-route to California for Almond Duty” .

Farm Tour Discussion

Paul Bishop led a discussion on the Farm Tour. A map was distributed indicating where the previous tours were held and farms that are willing to host a tour. He stated that the location could be either the northeast or the southwest part of the County. Legislators, EDPT, AFPB, the County Planning Board, and the press are invited. Barbara George, David Koch, and David Zilker suggested that High School and Middle School Guidance Counselors, JCC Counselors, and the Advertisers from the Farmer-Neighbor Dinner also be invited.

A suggestion was made to change the name of the tour from “Farm Tour” to “Agriculture Business Tour”. Barbara George suggested that the tour be videotaped. Crystal Abers remarked that a slide show of the tour is shown at the Farmer-Neighbor Dinner.

Suggestions for farm visits included:

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|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| R & D Adams Dairy Farm | Gramco, Inc. |
| Gutchess Lumber Co | Rupp Family Forest |
| Southern Tier Dairy Services | Angus Hill Farm |
| William Schettine, horse farmer | Valley View Cheese Co. |

Charles Couture suggested possibly using Empire Coach Services for the tour; he stated the cost was very reasonable for their recent Farm Bureau Tour. It was mentioned that the problem with hiring a bus is that we never know how many will be attending the tour.

Jean Davis gave a report on information obtained from the Dairy Ag News; highlighting agriculture grants, current meeting/tour opportunities available for agriculture businesses and competitions for FFA members that will be held at Empire Farm Days.

She reported that on October 22nd and 23rd, at the Cattaraugus County Fair Grounds, an event called We Invite Local Manufacturers and Artisans (WILMA) will be held. Crystal Abers explained that this is an event where vendors can sell their Cattaraugus County locally made merchandise “Shop Local, Buy Local”. Last year approximately 40 vendors attended. It is a family fun event with woolly bear races. Jean Davis stated that we will be holding an ice cream social on Sunday from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. We are attempting to get more agriculture businesses involved in selling their products.

OPEN FORUM

James Finch reported on “Farmer to Cooler” and “Food to Table”. A chef from Olean is in the Atlanta, Georgia area and he is connecting farmers to their neighbors by taking out food trucks over 70 times a year. Barbara George reported that at Canalside in Buffalo there were 8 food trucks out over the weekend and they could have used another 10.

Charles Couture informed the Board that a new chicken farmer has located in West Valley. The farmer has an 11,000 bird chicken house; he produces free range chickens; sells brown eggs; and uses an automatic feed off conveyor.

James Finch reported that Sprague’s Maple Farms has purchased the Sprague Turkey Farm.

David Zilker reported that the north-south gas pipeline going from Erie County to Hinsdale offered a farmer \$8,000.00 for his property; once the property was appraised he was offered \$80,000.00.

It was noted that there is a now a large power sub-station at the intersection of the Five Mile Road and Rogers Road in the Town of Humphrey.

Howard V. VanRensselaer reported that William Schettine, horse farm owner on Archer Hill Road in Randolph, used well casings for his fence.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 6, 2016 at 1:00 pm at the County Center in Little Valley. The proposed date for Agriculture Business Tour is Tuesday, September 13th.

ADJOURNMENT

David Zilker moved to adjourn with a second by James Finch at 2:51 p.m. Motion was carried.